

**SCOPING STATEMENT
SEMINOE ROAD PILOT PROJECT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Dudley & Associates, LLC

Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office

Description of Project:

Dudley & Associates, LLC (Dudley) of Denver, Colorado, has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rawlins Field Office, that the company proposes to explore and potentially develop a coalbed methane (CBM) pilot project located within the administrative boundary of the BLM's Rawlins Field Office. The pilot project is located in Townships 23 and 24 North, Range 85 West, Carbon County, Wyoming, as shown on Map 1. The total project area encompasses approximately 8,320 acres, of which 4,240 acres are federal surface and mineral estate.

The pilot project consists of drilling, completing, and producing approximately 19 wells for evaluation. The federal action for this project involves the permitting of wells, roads, and pipelines on federal surface (approximately eight wells with associated access roads and pipelines) (see Map 1). Development on private lands with existing access may occur during preparation of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project; 11 wells and associated access roads are proposed for development on private lands. Additionally, federal approval would be necessary for the proposed natural gas pipeline linking the project area with existing interstate natural gas pipelines along Interstate 80 near Sinclair, Wyoming. This proposed pipeline would generally follow an existing pipeline from the project area to Sinclair.

Well spacing density would generally be four wells per section. Initial drilling operations are proposed to begin in summer 2000.

The primary objective for the pilot project will be to drill, complete, and produce the wells to determine:

- which coals are gas productive,
- economical drilling and completion techniques,
- if dewatering of the coal(s) can be achieved,
- produced water quantity and quality, and
- what depths or pressure windows may be preferred to target economic gas production.

Scoping Statement, Seminole Road Pilot Project EA

It is anticipated that the pilot project would be sufficient to evaluate the economic feasibility of producing CBM from the coal seams in the area. If the exploratory project is deemed successful, additional development plans beyond the scope of the Seminole Road EA would require further environmental analysis.

Approximately 10 days would be required to drill, log, and case each well utilizing a conventional rotary drilling rig and associated rig equipment. Two additional days would be required to run a bond log, perforate, and set a pump with a completion rig. The estimated size of a drill site location is 215 x 320 ft, with some site disturbance required to place the drill rig on level ground. A small reserve pit also would be constructed at each drill site location to hold drilling fluids and cuttings, and the reserve pit would be approximately 65 ft wide x 145 ft long x 10 ft deep. The estimated maximum surface disturbance required at each drill site location would be 2.0 acres. Drilling depths would generally be about 6,000 ft.

Each well would require a water discharge line and gas line. Water lines would converge where possible at a centralized discharge point to be determined in a water management plan. Gas lines from proposed wells would be tied into a small compressor for transmission. Gas volumes would dictate the volume of compression required.

Each well would be continuously production tested for an estimated 6 to 12 months to fully evaluate the commercial feasibility of any further development.

The proposed project area is currently accessed by existing developed and undeveloped roads. The gas produced within the project area eventually would be transported via a new gathering line linking the area with existing interstate pipelines along Interstate 80 south of the project area near Sinclair. A road network would be developed that would include new and upgraded roads.

Following drilling and completion, flowlines and gathering facilities would be installed with the required power supply. Water quality would be monitored and surface-discharged as per federal, state, and local requirements. If the wells prove to be nonproductive or uneconomical, all disturbed areas would be reclaimed to BLM or private landowner specifications.

Relationship to Existing Plans and Documents

Resource Management Plan. The Great Divide Resource Management Plan (RMP) (November 8, 1990) directs management of BLM-administered lands within the analysis area. The objective for management of oil and gas resources, as stated in the RMP, is to provide for leasing, exploration, and development of oil and gas while protecting other resource values. The development of CBM within the Seminole Road project area would be in conformance with the RMP. The environmental analysis that will be prepared on the Dudley proposal will incorporate appropriate decisions, terms, and conditions of use described in the RMP.

Scoping Statement, Seminole Road Pilot Project EA

Use Authorizations. Use authorizations (i.e., rights-of-way, permits) for roads, power lines, pipelines, and well site facilities will be processed through the BLM Application for Permit to Drill (APD) and Sundry Notice permitting process as long as the facilities remain on-lease and are owned and operated by the unit operator. Any facility located off-lease would require individual right-of-way permits.

Lease Stipulations. Some leases within the proposed area include special stipulations on occupancy. These are in addition to the standard lease terms. These stipulations are designed to protect surface resources such as soils, water, and wildlife by restricting periods of activity and areas of disturbance. Application of these lease stipulations will be handled on a case-by-case basis for each APD submitted to the BLM.

National Environmental Policy Act

On reviewing the Dudley proposal, the BLM has determined that an EA will be prepared. The impact analysis presented in the EA will allow for one of two decisions to be made by the BLM Field Manager. The first is whether to sign a Decision Record with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which would allow the exploration project to proceed. The second decision is to identify whether the project, as proposed, would result in significant impacts and would require preparation of an environmental impact statement.

One element of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) process is scoping. Scoping activities are initiated early in the process:

- to identify reasonable development alternatives to be considered in the environmental document;
- to identify environmental/socioeconomic issues of concern related to the proposed project; and
- to determine the depth of analysis for issues addressed in the environmental document.

This scoping statement has been prepared to enable government agencies, the general public, and other interested parties to participate in and contribute to the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of analysis for any NEPA document, and the BLM encourages public participation.

Scoping Statement, Seminole Road Pilot Project EA

Identified Resource Management Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

The following issues and concerns have been identified to date. The list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather a starting point for public input and a means of identifying the resource disciplines needed to conduct the analysis:

- potential impacts to wildlife habitats within the analysis area, including big game, sage grouse, and raptors;
- increased traffic and associated impacts on existing county, state, and BLM roads and highways;
- social and economic impacts to local communities;
- impacts to surface and ground water resources, including sedimentation/salinity to the North Platte River System and Seminole Reservoir;
- potential impacts to sensitive soils within the project area;
- impacts from emissions resulting from additional drilling and production activities;
- reclamation of disturbed areas and control of noxious weed invasions;
- potential conflicts with livestock management operations in the analysis area, including possible impacts to range improvements;
- potential impacts to cultural and historical values within the analysis area;
- potential impact to listed, or proposed for listing, threatened and endangered plant and animal species, including potential effects on downstream listed fish species;
- cumulative effects of drilling and development activities when combined with other ongoing and proposed developments on lands within the BLM Rawlins Field Office area;
- potential conflicts between mineral development activities and recreational opportunities; and
- visual impacts to the National Back Country Byway.

Interim Drilling Activities

While the Seminole Road EA is being prepared, the BLM will allow limited development of test wells within the proposed analysis area, and a total of two federal wells may be authorized to allow for the acquisition of data necessary for completion of the project EA. Prior to development of these two wells the BLM will require an APD for each well and the BLM will implement a site-specific EA for each APD. Interim drilling will be monitored by the BLM to ensure activities do not significantly affect the environment or are prejudicing the completion of the EA.

Scoping Statement, Seminoe Road Pilot Project EA

Interdisciplinary Team

Based on the current understanding of issues, concerns, and opportunities and established objectives from other plans, an interdisciplinary team (IDT) made up of the following specialists and skills has been identified:

- Air Quality Specialist;
- Archaeologist;
- Coal Specialist;
- Environmental Scientist (surface protection);
- Geologist;
- Hydrologist;
- Interdisciplinary Team Leader;
- NEPA Specialist;
- Petroleum Engineer;
- Public Affairs Specialist;
- Range Management Specialist;
- Realty Specialist;
- Recreation Planner;
- Soil Scientist; and
- Wildlife Biologist.

Timing Needs or Requirements

Public input is important in establishing the level and scope of the analysis. The public is encouraged to participate throughout the environmental analysis process to help in identifying the level of analysis needed, alternatives to the proposed action, other issues or concerns that should be analyzed, mitigative opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure the completeness of the analysis process.

An open house will be held to discuss the Seminoe Road Pilot Project. The meeting is scheduled for 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., June 26, 2000, at the following location:

Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office
1300 North Third Street
Rawlins, WY 82301

There will be no formal presentation at the open house. Rather, personnel from Dudley and BLM will be on hand to answer questions regarding this project. There will also be an opportunity to submit any issues or concerns on the proposal.

Scoping Statement, Seminole Road Pilot Project EA

Your comments are due by July 12, 2000. Please submit your comments to:

Address: Brenda Vosika Neuman, Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office
1300 North Third Street
P.O. Box 2407
Rawlins, WY 82301

Email: rawlins_wymail@blm.gov
(Please refer to the Seminole Road Pilot Project in your email response.)

Scoping Statement, Seminoe Road Pilot Project EA

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following individuals and organizations will receive a copy of this scoping statement:

FEDERAL OFFICES

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Library of Congress
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Washington, D.C., Office
Rock Springs Field Office
Wyoming State Office
Library, Denver
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of Energy

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Geological Survey
U.S. Government Printing Office
U.S. Representative Barbara Cubin
U.S. Senator Mike Enzi
U.S. Senator Craig Thomas

STATE AGENCIES

Dept. of Employment, Research & Planning
Division
Governor Jim Geringer
State Land Officer
State Representatives
State Senators
Wyoming Department of Environmental
Quality

Wyoming Dept. of Commerce
Div. of Economic & Commercial
Development
Wyoming Department of Transportation
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming Highway Commission
Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation
Commission

Wyoming Public Service Commission
Wyoming Recreation Commission
Wyoming State Engineer's Office
Wyoming State Geological Survey
Wyoming State Historical Preservation
Office
Wyoming State Planning Coordinator

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Carbon County Commissioners
Carbon County Planning Commission

Carbon County Public Library

Carbon County Road and Bridge

MUNICIPALITIES

City of Bairoil
Mayor - Hanna
Mayor - Medicine Bow

Mayor - Saratoga
Mayor - Sinclair
Medicine Bow Town Council

Rawlins Chamber of Commerce
Rawlins City Manager
Rawlins Planning Commissioner

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Francis Brown
Eastern Shoshone Tribal Council
Comanche Tribal Council
Crow Tribal Administration
Clifford Duncan
Northern Arapahoe Tribal Council

Northern Cheyenne Cultural Committee
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council
Ogalala Sioux Tribal Council
Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council
Shoshone Tribal Cultural Center
Shoshone-Arapahoe Joint Tribal Council

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Uinta Ute Cultural Rights and Protections
Uinta-Ouray Tribal Council
Ute Mountain Tribe
Ute Tribal Council
Haman Wise, Sr.

LOCAL MEDIA

Casper Star-Tribune
Denver Post
KCWY TV
KFBC RAdio
KGWC TV - Casper
KRAL - Rawlins

KRKK - Rock Springs
KSIT - Rock Springs
KTWO - Casper
KTWO TV - Casper
KUWR - University of Wyoming

Laramie Boomerang
Laramie News Service
Rawlins Daily Times
Rocky Mountain News
Saratoga Sun
Wyoming State Tribune/Eagle

Scoping Statement, Seminoe Road Pilot Project EA

OTHER AGENCIES, INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, INDIVIDUALS, GRAZING PERMITTEES, LEASE AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY HOLDERS, LANDOWNERS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| American Museum of Natural History | Flying J Oil and Gas | Terrence M. McNulty |
| Anadarko Petroleum Corp. | Forrest Construction Inc. | Miller Estate Company |
| Anderson Oil Co. | Dale Forsberg | Gert Milliken |
| Arch of Wyoming | Dwight France | Montana Oil Journal |
| Archaeological Services | John W. France | Trent Morgan |
| James Alan and Betty C. Archard, Trustees | Virgil Franklin | Jimmy D. Morrison |
| Craig Barber | Chris Frost | Orvie E. and Carolyn Morrison |
| Barlow & Haun, Inc. | Gary Holson Environmental Planning | Lance Morrow |
| Richard H. Bate | Earl J. and Bette Jo Gorman | Moe Morrow |
| Robert L. Bayless | Thomas A. and Jeanne Graebert | Candy Moulton |
| Dallas Bennett | Greystone | Murie Audubon Society |
| Ken Besel | Richard Gregory | National Weather Service |
| Terry L. and Janet L. Binger | Roy L. and Marie E. Hall | National Wildlife Federation |
| Bio Environmental Associates | Lavern Hammarsten | Natural Resources Defense Council |
| Biodiversity Associates, Friends of the Bow | Wes Handley | The Nature Conservancy |
| Bjork, Lindley, Danielson, & Baker, P.C. | Max D. and Naomie Hardy | Bernard J. Nieder |
| Michael J. Blevins | Alton Harrison | OCI Wyoming LP |
| Doug Blewitt | Don Hartley | OCTA |
| Bow River Ranches | John and Lois Haun PTS | Steve Olsen |
| Roland E. Bowen | Hayden Wing Associates | Pacific Power & Light |
| Dennis J. Brabec | William C. Heisner, Jr. | Brad Palm |
| Steven Brady | Bobbie Herman | Gerald and Nancy Palm |
| G.W. Brashier | Darlene G. and Carrie Herman | Palo Production Co. |
| Robert J. and Gwenn D. Brewer | Ivan Herold | Barbara Parsons |
| Vern Brodsho | Highland Enterprises | Sandra Earlene Patterson |
| Howard M. and Audrey Brokaw | Earline Hittel | People for Wyoming |
| James M. and Joanne H. Bryan | John A. Hochenauer | People for the West |
| Van K. Bullock | Humane Society of the U.S. | Henry G. and Teresa Perez |
| Cabot Oil and Gas Production Co. | Mary E. Hunt | Petrogulf Corp. |
| Tim Calvert | Neil Hurst | Petroleum Association of Wyoming |
| Vanessa Cameron | Oliver D. Ihasz | Petroleum Information Corp. |
| Lewis F. and Connie M. Capehart | IHS Energy Group | PFUSA |
| Carbon County Coalition | Independent Petroleum Association of | Margaret and Roger Pilgrim |
| Carbon County Farm Bureau | Mountain | Robert Pixler |
| Carbon County Stockgrowers | States | Platte River Power Authority |
| Brice Carpenter | Industrial Gas Resources | Platte Valley Construction |
| Gene Carrico | Gerald Jacob | Pat R. and Faye Porter |
| James L., Jr., and Patricia Ann Chant | Catherine J. and John V. Jaramillo | Poulson, Odell & Peterson |
| Del Clair | Mary Ann Jerome | Powder River Basin Resource Council |
| Coleman Oil & Gas | Bob Johnson | Predator Project |
| Colorado Interstate Gas Co. | M.C. Johnson | PTI Communications |
| Colorado State University | Johnson-Fermelia Co. | Public Lands Advocacy |
| Nancy H. Comeau | Bill Jones | Purves Environmental |
| Conoco Inc. | Leroy and Margaret Jons | RAG Shoshone Coal Corp. |
| Conservancy of the Phoenix | Julander Energy Co. | Randall Ramsey |
| Leroy J. and Margaret M. Cope | Kaiser-Francis Oil Company | Noah C. Ravia |
| Leon Corpuz, Jr. | Ken Kamon | Joseph C. Reiker |
| Robert J. and Patricia L. Corrado | Fred R. Kelly, Jr. | River Gas Corp. |
| Council of Governments | Lois M. Kelly | Curtis Rochelle |
| Cowboy 3-Shot Sage Grouse Foundation | Stanley W. Kempa | Rocky Mountain Casing Crews Inc. |
| Gerald D. and Judith N. Cox | Jack Kersting | Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation |
| Defenders of Wildlife | Klabzuba Oil and Gas | Rocky Mountain Oil & Gas Association |
| David R. Deleuil | Jerry E. Kromrey | Joseph S. Rose |
| Donald and Mary Dixon | G.A. Larsen | Rosebud Coal Sales Co. |
| Dolar Oil Properties | Karen Larsen | Rodger A. and Mary E. Roush |
| Richard Ducharme | Sain Larsen | Irwin Rubenstein |
| Dudley & Associates, LLC | D.E. and M.C. Lawson, Trust | Salisbury Livestock Co. |
| Brenda Dawn and James E. Dyer | David E. Lieb | Santa Fe Snyder Corp. |
| Earth Tech | Marjorie P. Lunden | Thomas R. Sarver, Jr. |
| Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund Inc. | Ernest R. Manierre | Robert Scherer |
| Patrick Eastman | Marathon Oil Co. | Schmid Oilfield Services, Inc. |
| Elk Mountain Ranch, LLC | James F. and Vicki J. Martzke | SeaCrest Group |
| Elk Mountain Trading Co. | Joe Maxson | |
| Energy Analysts | Mary Kay Maxson | |
| Environmental Defense Fund | McElvain Oil and Gas Properties | |
| Field Museum of Natural History | Lee G. and Barbara J. McKean | |
| Department of Geology | | |
| Byron Fitzgerald | | |

Scoping Statement, Seminoe Road Pilot Project EA

Seminoe Boat Club
William K. Shaffer
Sierra Club
Lorraine T. Sikocinski
Charles W. and Evelyn M. Simon
Sinclair Oil Corp.
Frederick M. Slattery, Jr.
Judith A. Smith
Louis H. and Mabel Southerland
Southwest Wyoming Industrial Assoc.
Southwest Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation
Margaret Steinwender
John P. Strang
SWEDA/Den Costantino
Swift Creek Consulting
Three Forks Ranch Corp.
Thunder Basin Consulting
LaVonne Tlustos
Harry L. Todd, Jr.
Mike Todd
Raymond L. Todd
Trigon-Sheehan, LLC.
Tri-State Generationa & Transmission
Assoc.
Trout Unlimited
Uintah Engineering & Land Surveying
Union Pacific Resources Company
URS, Woodward Clyde
US Energy/Crested
US West Communications
UW Dept. of Range Land Ecology
Joseph S. and Charlott L. Vold
Mary F. and Lewis C. Waldron
Ray Weber
Angel R. Wegner
WESTECH
Western Ecosystems
Western Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation
Dick Wildermann
Wilderness Society
Wildlife Management Institute
Williams Field Services
Bo Wilson
Wolf Continental Divide Trail Society
Wyoming Advocates for Animals
Wyoming Assoc. of Municipalities
Wyoming Association of Professional
Archaeologists
Wyoming Assoc. of Professional Historians
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming Mining Association
Wyoming Natural Diversity Database
Wyoming Outdoor Council
Wyoming Public Lands Council
Wyoming Sportsman's Assoc.
Wyoming Stockgrowers Association
Wyoming Wildlife Federation
Wyoming Woolgrowers Association
Yates Petroleum Corp.
Gordon Yellowman
Art Zeiger
Richard Charles Zielinski